UNEARTHED: 1995 photo shows Pope Leo XIV participating in Pachamama ritual

Exclusive to LifeSiteNews, this explosive revelation will feature prominently in Fr. Charles Murr's forthcoming book on the new pontiff.

Celebración del Rito de la pachamama (madre tierra), que es un rito agricolo ofrecido por las culturas del Sur-Andino en el Perú y Bolivia.

Fr. Robert Prevost (now Pope Leo XIV) present at a Pachamama ritual in 1995 LifeSiteNews

John-Henry Westen

Wed Mar 18, 2026 - 3:00 pm EDT

Listen to this article
4 min

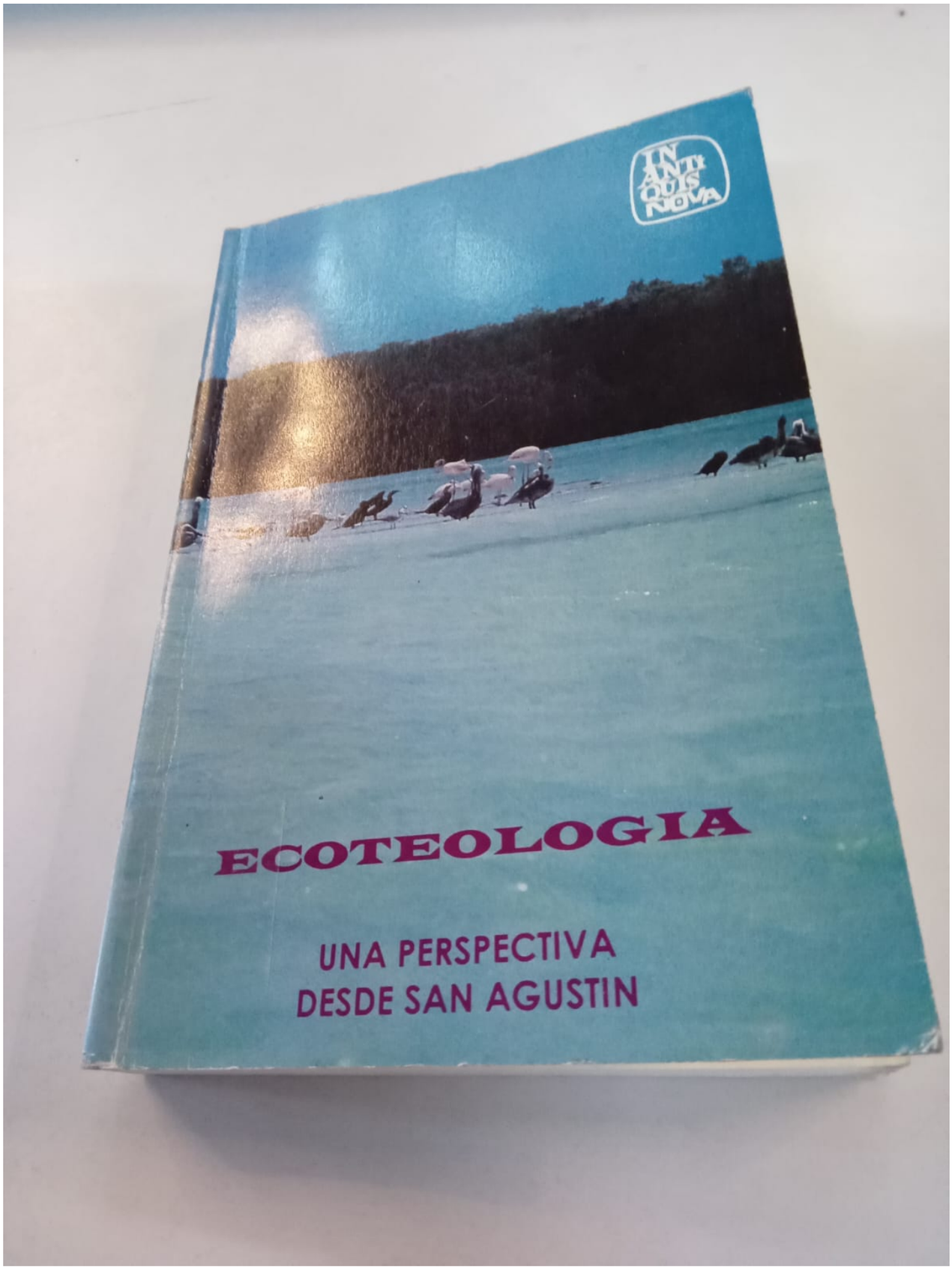
(LifeSiteNews) — In an explosive revelation that will feature prominently in his forthcoming book on the new Pontiff, *Faith & Reason* co-host Father Charles Murr has confirmed that Pope Leo XIV – then Father Robert Francis Prevost, OSA, actively participated in a pagan Pachamama "Mother Earth" agricultural ritual while attending an official Augustinian theological symposium.

The story was first brought to light by Fr. Murr, who has spent months meticulously compiling documentation for his upcoming book on Leo XIV. Three Augustinian priests have now independently confirmed to Fr. Murr that Robert Prevost is clearly visible among the kneeling participants in the central photograph. Although none of the three were present at the 1995 ritual itself, they immediately and unmistakably recognized their confrere from the published image.

Celebración del Rito de la pachamama (madre tierra), que es un rito agricolo ofrecido por la culturas del Sur-Andino en el Perú y Bolivia.

The image appears in the official proceedings of the *IV Simposio-Taller "Lectura de San Agustín desde América Latina"* (São Paulo, January 23-28, 1995), published as the book *Ecoteología: Una Perspectiva desde San Agustín* (México, 1996). The official caption beneath the photo of kneeling participants reads:

> *Celebración del Rito de la pachamama (madre tierra), que es un rito agrícola ofrecido por las culturas del Sur-Andino en el Perú y Bolivia.*
>
> Celebration of the Rite of Pachamama (Mother Earth), which is an agricultural rite offered by the cultures of the South-Andean region in Peru and Bolivia.



READ: Pachamama rituals linked to alleged human sacrifice in new report

The same volume includes a large group photograph explicitly captioned "*Foto de todos los participantes del Simposio Sao Paulo Brasil*," placing the future Pope squarely among the attendees of an event that openly celebrated the Pachamama ritual as part of its "ecotheology" program.

Fr. Murr told *Faith & Reason*: “The man who is now Leo XIV was documented kneeling in a pagan earth goddess ritual in an official gathering of his own religious order. The implications for the direction of the Church under this pontificate are profound.”

Fr. Murr has obtained high-resolution scans of the proceedings (including the clear kneeling Pachamama photograph) from the Salesian Central Library in Buenos Aires, Argentina (stamped call number 276.04 ACU :504 / 30.161, *Biblioteca Central Salesiana*, No. 30161).

This *Faith & Reason* exclusive marks the first public presentation of evidence that will form a central chapter in Fr. Charles Murr’s forthcoming book on Pope Leo XIV.

Another image from the book shows that in addition to the Pachamama ceremony, the participants celebrated a Mass, and Prevost (Leo) can be seen standing and holding hands with other participants in the same spot where the Pachamama ritual took place.

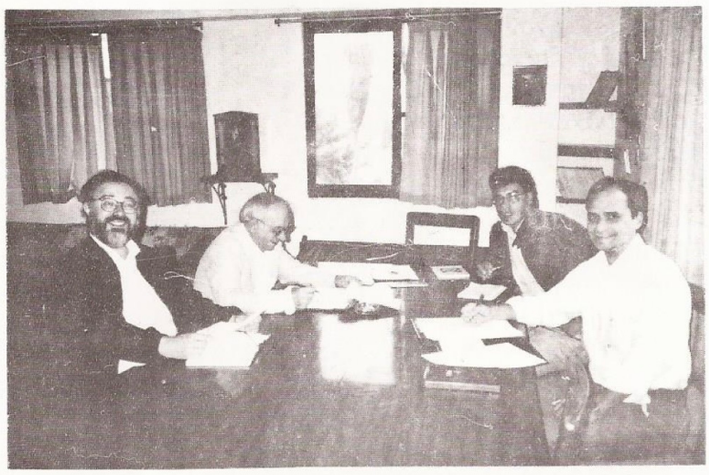
Celebración eucaristica en el jardin de la casa de retiros Sao Paulo Brasil.

Yet another photo from the event, showing all the participants of the symposium, also confirms Prevost's attendance.

LifeSite confirmed the photos of Leo at the ritual were in fact him by comparing images from the same period found in the Augustinian Spanish-language magazine *OALA*, where he is named "Roberto Prevost."

INTEGRANDO AL PERU AGUSTINO

El "Espíritu de Conocoto" va tomando cuerpo dentro de las circunscripciones del Perú. Durante el mismo encuentro, los superiores mayores decidieron reunirse para seguir estudiando opciones para una mayor colaboración entre todos los agustinos en el país, cuya presencia es la más numerosa en toda América Latina después de la de México.



Los superiores, en su reunión en el mes de marzo, nombraron una comisión de animación formado por un miembro de cada circunscripción. En la Casa de Retiros en Villa la Encantada (Vicariato de Chulucanas), la Comisión se reunió el 16 y 17 de mayo pasado, contando con la presencia del P. Diego Natal (Iquitos), P. Eugenio Alonso (Provincia de Perú), Hno. Vicente Valenzuela (Apurímac) y P. Roberto Prevost (Chulucanas). Además el P. Arturo Purcaro estuvo presente para ofrecer sus habilidades como facilitador en la reunión.

La Comisión había recibido dos tareas principales de los superiores: Estudiar la posiblidad de un encuentro de todos los agustinos peruanos, e investigar opciones de formación permanente, con la expectativa que se formularan propuestas sobre estos dos temas. Fue una experiencia esperanzadora, y en medio del diálogo se logró formular una propuesta concreta sobre un Plan para concretizar los proyectos que habían sido indicados por los superiores.

Sin duda, la opinión unánime de la Comisión es que el diálogo continuo entre las cuatro circunscripciones es muy importante para fortalecer la presencia de la Orden en el Perú.

On the *Faith & Reason* episode today, Fr. Murr noted how this violates the First Commandment and how the martyrs of the Church gave their lives rather than participate even slightly in ceremonies to false gods.

The Vatican Press Office was approached for comment but has not yet responded.